

III. REMARKS

Claims 5 and 9 are amended. Claims 1-10 are pending in this application.

Claims 5-7 and 9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph as being indefinite.

Claims 5 and 9 are amended to overcome the rejection.

Claims 1-2 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 as being anticipated by Igarashi et al., U.S. Patent Pub. No. 2004/0099826 ("Igarashi"). Igarashi is not valid prior art. Igarashi is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/301,841, filed on November 22, 2002, and hence has an effective date of November 22, 2002. The instant application claims priority from DE Application 10250353.2, filed October 25, 2002, which precedes the effective date of Igarashi. Hence, Igarashi is not valid prior art against the instant application. Igarashi forms the basis for all rejections in the instant Action. Thus, as Igarashi is not valid prior art, all rejections must be withdrawn.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record, and are in proper form for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.



The Commissioner hereby authorized to charge payment for any fees associated with this communication or credit any over payment to Deposit Account No. 16-1350.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on the date indicated below as first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

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